

Message Text

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43

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SUBJECT: MORE PRONOUNCEMENTS BY OPEC SECRETARY GENERAL

REF. VIENNA 795

1. SUMMARY. OPEC SECRETARY GENERAL KHENE DEPLORES YAMANI'S
TOKYO STATEMENT ON LOWERING OIL PRICES AND COMMENTS DISPARAGINGLY
ON MIDDLEMEN ACTIVITIES OF MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES. END SUMMARY.

2. REFTEL REPORTED HIGHLIGHTS OF OPEC SECRETARY GENERAL KHENE'S
JAN. 28 SPEECH BEFORE AUSTRIAN FOREIGN POLICY GROUP. OTHER
RECENT KHENE PRONOUNCEMENTS ARE:

A. INTERVIEW WITH VIENNA DAILY "DIE PRESSE" IN WHICH
HE REPORTEDLY COMMENTED ON TOKYO STATEMENT OF SAUDI OIL MINISTER
YAMANI REGARDING SAUDI ARABIA'S INTENT TO LOWER CRUDE OIL
PRICES. ACCORDING NEWSPAPER REPORT DR. KHENE SAID SUCH A MEASURE
WOULD MAKE A COMMON PRICE POLICY WITH OPEC MORE DIFFICULT.
HE WAS QUOTED AS SAYING, "WE CANNOT PREVENT POLITICAL PRICES."
HE INFORMED REPORTER THAT NEXT OPEC MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
WOULD BE HELD AFTER FEB. 11 WASHINGTON CONFERENCE BUT BEFORE
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APRIL 1.

B. SIGNED KHENE ARTICLE ON FEATURE PAGE ON MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES IN EARLIER "DIE PRESSE" ISSUE. STATING HE WAS LIMITING HIS OBSERVATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL OIL COMPANIES ONLY, HE ASSERTED SUCH FIRMS WERE BY NO MEANS NEEDED AS MIDDLEMEN IN OIL TRADE. ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT DOUBT THEIR EFFICIENCY, IT HAD BENEFITTED ONLY THEMSELVES AND THEIR COUNTRIES WHILE INTERESTS OF PEOPLES OF OIL PRODUCING COUNTRIES WERE IGNORED. HE REPEATED FAMILIAR CHARGES THAT COMPANIES KEPT OIL PRICES LOW IN 1959-60 AND ADDED, "NOW THAT SOME OPEC MEMBERS HAVE COME INTO POSSESSION OF THEIR OWN OIL THROUGH NATIONALIZATION, COOPERATION BETWEEN OIL PRODUCING AND OIL CONSUMING COUNTRIES CAN BE GREATLY INTENSIFIED." KHENE PREDICTED THAT, IN FUTURE, OIL COMPANIES WILL HAVE PLAYED OUT THEIR MIDDLEMAN ROLE ALTHOUGH THEIR USEFULNESS IN TECHNICAL FIELD WOULD BE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE FOR THE FUTURE, AND THEIR TALENTS IN THIS AREA SHOULD NOT BE WASTED. KHENE CHARGED THAT "BAD IMAGE" OF OIL COMPANIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WAS CAUSED BY THEIR SINGLEMINDED PURSUIT OF PROFITS -- SOMETIMES ILLEGAL PROFITS -- WITH SOMETIMES CORRUPTIVE METHODS AND INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THESE COUNTRIES. HE SAID THAT INVESTIGATIONS OF MULTINATIONAL OIL COMPANIES HAVE PROVIDED THE STRONG INVOLVEMENT OF THEIR HOME GOVERNMENTS IN THEIR ACTIVITIES AND THAT CLOSE CONNECTIONS -- WHETHER DIRECT OR INDIRECT -- HAD ALWAYS EXISTED BETWEEN THE COMPANIES AND THEIR GOVERNMENTS.

3. DEPT. REPEAT AS DESIRED. HUMES

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